

# Buy Local, Buy WI (BLBW) Grant Program



## Grant Manual FY2015 Guidelines

### **Pre-Proposals due to DATCP: December 1, 2014**

Invitation to submit full proposals: Late December 2014

Full Proposals due to DATCP: January 31, 2015

Target Date for grant award notification: Mid-March 2015

Project State date: April 1, 2015

Questions related to the pre-proposal submission should be directed to:  
Juli Speck; [juli.speck@wi.gov](mailto:juli.speck@wi.gov), 608-224-5134

Questions related to full proposal submission should be directed to:  
Teresa Engel; [teresa.engel@wi.gov](mailto:teresa.engel@wi.gov), 608-224-5101

## Buy Local, Buy WI (BLBW) Grant Program FY2015 Grant Manual

### INTRODUCTION

The Buy Local, Buy Wisconsin program is an economic development program designed to help the Wisconsin agricultural and food industry find ways to reduce marketing, distribution and processing hurdles impeding the expansion of Wisconsin's local food system.

The Department of Agriculture, Trade & Consumer Protection (DATCP) invites proposals for projects that will increase the demand for and supply of locally produced foods in Wisconsin.

Grants are awarded following a competitive review process. Please refer to the evaluation criteria when preparing your proposals. The target date for grant award notification is March 2015. Awarded project start date is April 1, 2015.

### PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS AND SUBMITTAL PROCESS

#### Pre-Proposal Process:

Please refer to the evaluation criteria found in this manual when preparing your pre-proposal. Supporting documents are **not required** for pre-proposals. Each pre-proposal must be limited to one project and applicants may submit separate pre-proposals for different projects. However, DATCP may not make more than one grant award to the same person in the same state fiscal biennium.

#### Pre-Proposal Required Elements:

- Pre-proposals must include all of the required elements listed below.
- **Pre-proposals narrative may not exceed 3 pages in length excluding the cover page and budget templates.**
- Proposals will be accepted in Word or pdf format, single spaced, Times New Roman with 12 point font.

#### Pre-Proposal Required Elements Checklist:

- Cover Page – use template provided**
- Budget – use template provided**
- Narrative – may not exceed 3 pages**
  - **Project Goals and Objectives/Work plan**
    - List the project goal(s).
    - List the specific objectives necessary to meet these goals.
    - Brief outline of work plan
  - **Anticipated Project Results**
    - Funded projects will be asked to report on economic development activity including: increased local food sales, new and/or retained jobs, and new investment generated. List and describe your economic development results and how you plan to measure them.
  - **Financial Capability/Sustained Business Growth**
    - Provide a brief overview of your organization's fiscal history, including award of other grants for this project.

- Explain how this project or outcomes from this project will continue when grant funds are gone.
- Explain financial feasibility of project
- **Support/Commitment**
  - What makes you the right organization/project team to carry out this project?
  - Describe the level of private sector commitment. Examples:
    - Do you have buyers/markets committed to purchasing food products as a part of this proposed project?
    - Do you have producers/suppliers committed to selling food products as a part of this proposed project?
  - This section should also illustrate how the proposed project is either driven by or supported by local food producers and buyers.

Full Proposal Process:

Full Proposals will be accepted only from the applicants who are invited to submit. Full proposals must adhere to the requirements and objectives in the template to be provided to selected applicants. Please refer to the evaluation criteria found in this manual when preparing your full proposal.

Pre-Proposals must be submitted by email:

1. Email: juli.speck@wi.gov

An original of each pre-proposal, cover sheet, and budget must be received at DATCP by 4:00 PM on December 1, 2014 in order to meet the application deadline.

**PROPOSAL REVIEW CRITERIA**

Each proposal must include sufficient information to allow the reviewers to evaluate the proposal. The proposal must merit financial support and demonstrate that the proposed project has clearly stated objectives, a sound work plan, and necessary expertise to successfully complete the project.

<b>Evaluation Criteria</b>
1) <u>Need (Not included in Pre-Proposal)</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Preliminary work justifies the proposed project.</li> <li>● Project demonstrates filling a business need or opportunity.</li> <li>● Fills or creates a clearly defined new market opportunity for selling Wisconsin produced foods to Wisconsin buyers.</li> </ul>
2) <u>Goals/Objectives/Work Plan</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Proposed work plan is reasonable in relation to timeline and project team.</li> <li>● Work plan clearly linked to project goals and desired outcomes.</li> <li>● Demonstrates innovation in project management and approach.</li> </ul>
3) <u>Anticipated Results</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Project demonstrates that it will increase the purchase of WI food products for sale to local purchasers, and includes a way to measure the increase that is directly related to project work.</li> <li>● Project demonstrates economic development in the form of new/retained jobs, new investment, increased sales, etc.</li> <li>● Shows broad impact – Project benefits the local food industry and/or the public rather than a single organization, institution, individual or commercial product.</li> <li>● Project directly impacts community development – Expanded community leadership, increased social capital, more effective non-profit and/or community based organizations, and/or improved quality of life.</li> <li>● Project benefits clearly demonstrate return on project investment.</li> <li>● Project illustrates a direct benefit to local food producers and local markets.</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will build supply chain infrastructure for building Wisconsin’s local food system.</li> <li>• Builds a competitive advantage for Wisconsin agriculture.</li> </ul> <p><u>Project’s approach to measuring and tracking project results.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project clearly defines expected results.</li> <li>• Project incorporates a viable method for tracking and measuring project results.</li> <li>• Project goals clearly translate into anticipated results</li> <li>• Budget allocation for tracking and measurement is reasonable.</li> </ul>
<p>4) <u>Financial Feasibility/Sustained Business Growth</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Viability of business and market outcomes.</li> <li>• Fiscal strength of applicant</li> <li>• Project will result in sustained economic impact or business growth.</li> <li>• Proposal clearly identifies how the project will continue/be sustained beyond the life of the grant.</li> </ul>
<p>5) <u>Budget</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Justification exists for each budget item. Budget items are clear, efficient and reasonable.</li> <li>• Budget items and work plan tasks are clearly linked.</li> <li>• 50% of total project costs match is identified.</li> </ul>
<p>6) <u>Support/Commitment</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong project support by participants, partners, industry and other relevant individuals or organizations.</li> <li>• Project leadership and commitment.</li> <li>• Capabilities of project team match needs of project.</li> </ul>
<p>7) <u>Communications/Project Replication (Not included in Pre-Proposal)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clearly defines how project information will be shared with the local food community.</li> <li>• Project clearly defines expected results.</li> <li>• Efforts could be replicated in other areas of the state.</li> </ul>

**AVAILABLE FUNDS**

The BLBW grant program has \$200,000 allocated for grant awards for this fiscal year 2015. Projects must be concluded within two years of contract start date. The maximum grant award is \$50,000 per project. DATCP may not make more than one grant award to the same person in the same state fiscal biennium. Grant applicants must provide cash or in-kind match equivalent to or greater than 50% of total project costs (1:1 match).

*Example: Total project costs = \$100,000 (\$50,000 grant request + \$50,000 match)*

**ELIGIBLE PARTICIPANTS**

Proposals will be accepted from individuals, groups, businesses and organizations involved in Wisconsin agriculture, Wisconsin food processing, Wisconsin food distribution, Wisconsin food warehousing, Wisconsin retail food establishments, or Wisconsin agricultural tourism. Proposals may involve collaborations or partnerships between producers, food businesses, industry, academia or organizations. Applicants may cooperate with any public or private organization. Projects with broad reaching impacts will receive higher consideration. **Projects should benefit the local food industry and/or the public rather than a single organization, institution, individual or commercial product. Proposed projects should be driven by or supported by local food producers.**

Each applicant must designate an individual who has authority to sign a contract with DATCP on its behalf. Each applicant must also indicate an individual who will be the lead person responsible for implementing the project. Each applicant, including co-applicants, must demonstrate a proven ability to

carry out all elements of the proposed project. Preference will be given to projects whose lead person or entity has a proven track record of grant management and/or a long-standing track record of strong fiscal experience and capability. Employees of DATCP and family members (i.e., mother, father, brother, sister, spouse, and children) are not eligible to receive a grant or participate as a project collaborator.

### **ELIGIBLE EXPENSES**

Eligible project expenses during grant contract include, but are not limited to:

- Operating expenses, including expenses for salaries and wages, contract and consulting services, travel,\* supplies and public information.
- Real estate and equipment rental or leasing.
- The purchase of equipment whose full value is ordinarily depreciable within one year.
- Reasonable depreciation expense incurred for capital equipment during the grant contract term.

\* Travel expenses must follow state per diem guidelines.

### **INELIGIBLE EXPENSES**

Ineligible expenses include, but are not limited to:

- Real estate purchases.
- Repayment of loans or mortgages.
- Rent or contract payments for time periods extending beyond the term of the grant contract.
- Equipment purchases, except for certain equipment purchases and depreciation expenses specifically authorized in the above eligible expenses.
- Administrative or overhead costs that are not direct costs of the grant project.
- Expenses incurred prior to grant approval and signed contract date.

### **MATCHING FUNDS**

The applicant's contributions to the project need to be identified. The applicant must provide at least 50% of the total projects costs (1:1 match). *Example: Total project costs = \$100,000 (\$50,000 grant request + \$50,000 match).* Matching funds may be in the form of cash or in-kind contributions for eligible project expenses. A matching commitment may include a commitment of capital, land, labor, equipment or cash related to the grant project. Matching funds may include grant funds received from sources other than DATCP.

### **TENTATIVE REVIEW TIMELINE**

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### **CONTRACTS**

A contract will be developed by DATCP for each funded project. Upon agreement to the contract terms by the applicant, the DATCP Secretary will consider the contract for final approval. No funding commitment is final until the contract is signed and executed.

DATCP's BLBW program staff will monitor and evaluate each funded project. DATCP reserves the right to audit the applicant's books and records relating to the performance of the project during and up to three years after completion of the project.

### **PAYMENTS**

Requests for reimbursements will be accepted on a monthly basis. To receive reimbursement, grantees must provide assurance that the work has been completed (i.e., include receipts and invoices) and must clearly outline expenditures. Twenty-five percent of the total grant funds will be retained until receipt of the completed final report and receipts for all expenditures.

### **LIABILITY**

DATCP will not be held liable for any costs incurred by any firm for work performed in the preparation of and production of an application or for any work performed prior to the formal execution of a contract.

### **OPEN RECORDS**

Applications submitted for funding and all related contracts and reports shall be subject to disclosure under the Public Records law. The grant applicant or recipient must clearly mark any information deemed a 'trade secret' that is included in the application, progress reports or final reports as "Confidential – Trade Secret – Not For Public Disclosure" at the time of submission. The department shall notify the grant recipient if a public records request is made for the information claimed to be trade secret by the grant recipient. The grant recipient may then proceed to obtain judicial protection for the information. Such information may be kept confidential by the department only as authorized by law (see s. 19.36(5), Wis. Stats.).

### **REPORTING REQUIREMENTS**

DATCP reserves the right to modify reporting requirements during the course of the project. Each approved grant recipient must submit semi-annual performance reports and one final performance report.

The semi-annual performance report template will be provided and shall include the following:

1. Briefly summarize activities performed, targets, and/or performance goals achieved during the reporting period for each project.
2. Note unexpected delays or impediments as well as favorable or unusual developments for each project.
3. A quantitative summary illustrating the increase in sales of locally grown or produced Wisconsin food products, new and/or retained jobs, and new investment during the reporting period due to project work.
4. Other quantitative measures including number of producers and Wisconsin buyers affected by work, infrastructural improvements to local food industry, and media/communication work performed.
5. Outline work to be performed during the next reporting period for each project.
6. Comment on the level of grant funds expended to date for each project.

The final performance report template will be provided and shall include the following:

1. A brief description of original intent of the project and perceived benefit of the project. How the issue or problem was approached via the project.
2. How the goals of the project were achieved.
3. A quantitative summary illustrating the increase in sales of locally grown or produced Wisconsin food products, new and/or retained jobs, and new investment during the reporting period due to project work.
4. Results, conclusions, and lessons learned for each project.
5. How progress has been made to achieve long term outcome measures for each project.
6. Additional information available (e.g., publications, web sites).
7. A plan to disseminate the project results to the industry.
8. Contact person for each project with telephone number and email address.

In addition to the final project report, DATCP reserves the right to conduct a follow-up survey of funded projects in order to determine long-term impacts of the project.

### **OTHER CONSIDERATIONS**

All applications submitted in response to this RFP become the property of DATCP. The agency reserves a royalty-free, nonexclusive and irrevocable license to reproduce, publish, otherwise use, and to authorize others to use materials produced under this grant agreement.

DATCP also reserves the right to:

- Post funded applications to the DATCP website.
- Reject any or all applications received.
- Waive or modify minor irregularities in applications received, after prior notification and agreement of applicant.
- Use any or all ideas submitted unless those ideas are covered by legal patent or proprietary rights.
- Clarify the scope of this program, within the RFP requirement and with appropriate notice to all applicants, to best serve the interests of the State of Wisconsin.
- Amend program specifications after their release, with appropriate written notice to potential applicants.
- Require a good faith effort on the part of the project sponsor to work with DATCP subsequent to project completion to develop or implement project results in Wisconsin.
- Withhold any payments when contract conditions are not met.

### **BLBW APPLICATION TIPS & SUGGESTIONS**

As you develop your grant application and work to create the strongest application possible, consider the following tips and suggestions.

- Have a UW Agricultural Extension Agent, educator, industry expert or producer read your application and provide feedback.
- Use an outline to help you organize your application.
- Keep your responses brief and focused on the purpose and impact of the project.
- Focus on project tasks and results, not on philosophy and personal opinion.

#### **NOTES**

1. Wisconsin food products: “Food product” means an unprocessed commodity or processed product that is used for food or drink by humans. “Food product” includes a food product ingredient. “Wisconsin food product” means a food product that is one of the following: grown in this state; produced from animals kept in this state; or primarily derived from food products that are grown in this state or produced from animals kept in this state.
2. Local purchaser: “Local purchaser” means a consumer who buys a Wisconsin food product at a location near the place where the food product is produced, or a person who buys a Wisconsin food product for resale at a location near the place where the food product is produced.